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ASLEF *Journal*

July 2009

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**UNION AND
EMPLOYERS
AGREE**

**REOPEN
THE
BEECHING
LINES**

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POLITICS CAN LEARN FROM UNION ELECTIONS



IT'S BEEN deeply painful to watch the unfolding of story after story about politicians' expenses over the past couple of months. I don't want to join in the mud-slinging as it's all been said. I'm more interested in how to stop politics steadily sliding into sleaze – and I'm convinced that the parties – all of them – can learn from our union elections.

Last month Marz Colombini was elected to join the Executive Committee as the member representing District One. Marz works in the District. The people entitled to vote for him come from the District. They know him, and he knows them. He does the same job, he understands their difficulties. There is a clear link between elector and elected.

This is no longer the case in Westminster elections. Too often we see candidates for Parliamentary seats who have little sympathy with the people who live in their constituency. They live different, alien lifestyles. How much understanding do you think Peter Mandelson had with the working people of Hartlepool? How many of them had a grandfather who was Cabinet minister or attended St Catherine's College, Oxford?

Other MPs have been 'parachuted' into safe Labour seats because they were friends of the Prime Minister. Labour Party members in Hull were told two weeks before the 1997 elections that a South London Blairite would be their candidate.

Political pressure was brought to bear on Normanton in West Yorkshire to ensure that the person who would represent them would be Ed Balls, an Economic Adviser to Gordon Brown who went to Nottingham High School – with its £9,000 a year fees.

Politics must stop being a job for superior Oxbridge types. Politicians must come from and reflect their own communities. They should live in their own constituencies. They should be part of, and committed to, the local people – and not to their own political careers.

If this happened, sleaze allegations would disappear, because local people would slap down MPs who started to get above themselves or who began to grow richer by the day.

Even better, if MPs were approachable and visible, the current disillusionment in politics would end. People would not feel inclined to use a vote for fascists like the BNP to register a protest. They could go to the person who represents them and explain what was on their mind to one of their own.

No train driver in the south-east is going to feel intimidated about letting Marz Colombini know how they feel, and they can be confident that his interests, life-style and aims are ones they share. Until we can all say the same about our Members of Parliament the 'disconnect' will continue, and we will all suffer for it.

KEITH NORMAN
GENERAL SECRETARY

NO TRAVEL LIMITS FOR PENSIONERS, SAYS UNION

KEITH NORMAN, ASLEF's general secretary, last month wrote to Keith Ludeman, the chief executive of the Go-Ahead Group, challenging the businessman's call to limit free travel schemes for pensioners. Mr Ludeman said pensioners should not be given a 'blank cheque' for travel and some companies are reportedly considering cutting routes used by the elderly to discourage them from travelling.

Keith Norman asked for Mr Ludeman's comments on three specific points

- ASLEF believes all pensioners – often the most vulnerable people in society – should be entitled to free bus transport. To cancel or reduce the scheme could make fares even for essential travel inaccessible to pensioners and, by reducing their mobility, further isolate the elderly from the rest of society.

- the Go-Ahead Group made £64.6 million profit from transport in the second half of 2008, so ASLEF finds it astonishing that anyone from the

company could suggest depriving pensioners of free bus travel. It is a fact that 2.5 million retired people live below the poverty line.

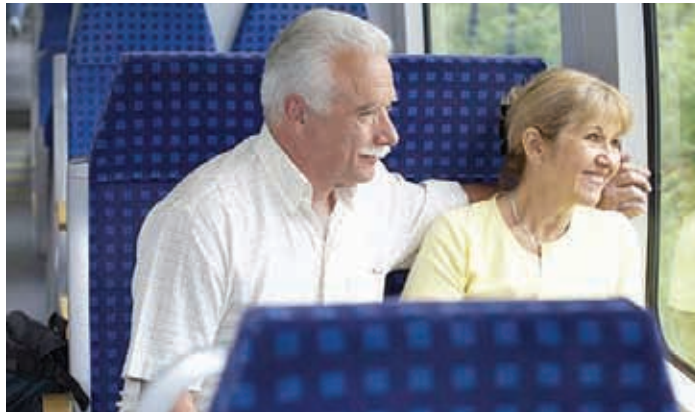
- 'Help the Aged' declare that one in eight elderly people describe themselves as 'isolated and lonely'. Restricting their access to transport and overall mobility would only increase this.

In Mr Ludeman's response he insisted that he had 'in no case' ever recommended that the scheme should be cancelled, adding, 'We support the Bus

Concessionary Fare Scheme but it must be funded properly.

'The decision about funding rests correctly with Government.'

Mr Ludeman says, 'I am sure you are aware of the many concerns raised on this point by local authorities who claim that without full and proper funding this gives rise to the reduction of either other Council budgets, increased Council Taxes, and lower reimbursement rates for buses or all three. This will of course have an impact on all Council tax payers including the over 60s.'



OFFICIAL SAFETY GUIDES NOW FREE The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is making millions of pounds worth of its priced publications available free online.

TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said, 'Union safety representatives need access to the safety guidance and approved codes of practice that the HSE produces in order to deal with problems at work or to challenge their employers when they cut safety corners in the workplace. As unpaid volunteers, safety reps often cannot afford to purchase copies of these materials themselves.'

The HSE has agreed that within the next year all priced publications will be accessible in pdf format on its website. This will be a great help to safety representatives in their work with employers to ensure compliance with safety laws and will hopefully promote good health and safety practice.

The first of the previously priced documents will appear online from September, with the remainder expected to be available for download by March 2010.

RSSB REVIEW OF RAILWAY SAFETY TRENDS

The Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) has published its Annual Safety Performance Report for 2008. The main points include

- There were no passenger or workforce fatalities in train accidents in 2008. This is the third year in the last four with no fatalities.

- In 2008, 70 accidental fatalities, 422 major injuries and 12,308 minor injuries (including shock and trauma) were recorded. The total level of harm in 2008 was 132.1 Fatalities and Weighted Injuries (FWI). This is 2% higher than 2007.

- Five passengers died in separate incidents – all at stations. This is the lowest

passenger fatality total recorded. The fatality rate per passenger journey is also at an historically low level.

- There were 47 potentially higher-risk train accidents (PHRTAs). This is the same as the 2007 total and similar to the average for the previous three years.

- There were small increases in both the number of SPADs and the predicted level of risk from SPADs during 2008. However, the underlying level of risk remains historically low at around 15% of its March 2001 level, compared to 13% at the end of 2007.

- Three members of the workforce died in accidents

during 2008: two track workers and one other member of staff. This compares with two workforce fatalities in both 2007 and 2006.

- Twelve pedestrians died at level crossings in 2008, compared with nine in 2007. This is the highest number of pedestrian fatalities since 1997 (when there were also twelve).

- There were two accidental fatalities involving road vehicle occupants at level crossings. This is comparable with levels seen over the previous three years.

- Fatalities from suicide (209) and trespass (47) totalled 256. This is similar to the average for the previous three years.



'IMPRESSIVE DEBUT' FOR SADIQ KHAN

SADIQ KHAN has made an impressive debut as Minister of State for Transport, according to ASLEF's general secretary Keith Norman. Sadiq, the South London MP who is the UK's first Muslim cabinet minister, had only been in post a couple of days when he announced the nationalisation of London and Continental Railways (LCR). 'If he carries on like this, we'll get on like a house on fire,' declared the union leader.

In a statement yesterday the Minister of State for Transport said the government would pay a nominal sum to take LCR into public ownership. This includes its interests in the Channel Tunnel rail link and Eurostar.

LCR owns High Speed One, the 67 mile-long high-speed track running from London to the Channel Tunnel, better known as the the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. LCR also owns the country's share in Eurostar, as well as various properties.

This is not, however, a sign that the Labour government has finally seen the wisdom of ceasing its privatisation crusade. Its objective is to prepare High Speed One for sale.

OBSTACLE DETECTION TRIAL AT FILEY

NETWORK RAIL (NR) has set up a trial of an obstacle detector at an automatic full barrier level crossing at Filey.

They have investigated various technologies including radar, CCTV, laser and infra red. Radar has been used in Italy, Holland, and Germany for ten years, with nearly 200 in use in Germany.

NR believes that cross acceptance of the systems used in Europe provides the fastest route for UK implementation.

In Britain, obstacle detection was fitted to Everton crossing about 8 years ago.

CICA CONCEDES THAT BEING CHASED BY GUNMEN IS TRAUMATIC

ASLEF needed to take the case of Driver Quincy Oji to an Appeal before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) would concede that being chased down an underground tunnel, dropped to the floor and threatened by armed men is a traumatic experience that merits compensation.

This is precisely what happened to Driver Oji on 22 July 2005. He was driving the tube train on which Jean Charles de Menezes was shot dead by heavily-armed specialist firearms police at Stockwell Station. The doors remained open and the train remained in the platform – while understandably Quincy took to his heels. He was pursued by armed police who

waved guns in his face as he lay on the ground. Thompsons Solicitors, who handled the case for the union, argued that Driver Oji should be compensated for the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) he suffered as a result of the experience.

The CICA resisted compensating the driver on the grounds that he was not the victim of a violent crime, because a crime had not happened, and that he was some distance from the shootings so would not have feared physical harm.

'I have never come across such spurious arguments to avoid paying compensation to someone who clearly deserves recompense,' said ASLEF general secretary Keith Norman. 'I'm delighted that we finally

have recognition of the trauma our member suffered, even if the £1,000 we have secured hardly reflects what Driver Oji has endured.

'It does make you wonder about the mega-cautious approach of CICA. Small wonder that it is often viewed as an uncaring and vindictive outfit.'

Andrew Hutson, the Thompsons solicitor who worked on the case, agreed. 'To my mind it would have been a grave injustice if the CICA had got away with refusing to offer any compensation, but that was certainly its intention. At least this successful appeal acknowledges the stresses endured by Driver Oji since the terrible events of four years ago.'

BEECHING'S VANDALISM CHALLENGED

Keith Norman, general secretary of ASLEF, has offered the union's full backing to calls by ATOC to reverse many of the rail line closures of the infamous 1960s Beeching Rail line cuts. 'Beeching's report amounted to social vandalism,' says Keith. 'That report went to Tory transport minister Ernest Marples, a politician who combined avarice and ignorance. We should not forget that Marples was the director of a road construction company, and that he considered railways to be relics of the past.'

Now the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) has called for many lines axed by Beeching and Marples to be reopened in order to link expanding towns to the rail network.

'ATOC says there is a strong business case for opening 14 lines and 40 new stations in England. ASLEF believes there is an even stronger social and environmental argument. The



Bordon Station in Hampshire closed in 1966

combination of the two makes a very compelling argument that I hope the government will respond to in a positive way. We will certainly continue to press the case for reversing the cuts,' Keith added.

ATOC has called for the reopening of more than 30 lines, the top 14 of which are:

- Hythe - Hampshire
- Brixham - Devon
- Bordon - Hampshire
- Fleetwood - Lancashire
- Rawtenstall - Lancashire
- Aldridge - West Midlands

- Brownhills - West Midlands
- Cranleigh - Surrey
- Ringwood - Hampshire
- Washington (Leemside) - Tyne and Wear
- Leicester to Burton - Derbyshire

- Skelmersdale - Lancashire
- Ashington and Blyth - Northumberland
- Wisbech - Cambridgeshire

In 1948 the rail network extended to 19,598 route miles and 6,685 stations. Thanks to Beeching, Marples and other vandals today those figures stand at 9,828 and 2,517 respectively.

MARZ FOR EXECUTIVE

Marz Colombini has been elected to fill the place on the Executive Committee vacated by Simon Weller, who is now National Organiser.

Marz won the election as EC member for District No 1 with Brother Davis in second place and Bro Sheehan in third.

'I would like to thank everyone who supported and voted for me,' Marz says. 'It's a great honour and I'll do everything I can to repay the faith ASLEF members in my district have shown in me.'

ASLEF BUCKS THE TRENDS WITH ELECTION WIN

Alan Moir, secretary of the union's Polmadie branch, managed to buck the trend towards the Scottish Nationalists last month when he held the Bishopbriggs South ward in East Dunbartonshire. The bye-election was caused by the death of Provost Alex Hannah.

Alan told local press, 'I am delighted to win this seat for Scottish Labour. I have very big boots to fill, but promise to work hard to represent all the people here.'



ASLEF WEBSITE GOES INTERACTIVE

A recent addition to the ASLEF website (www.aslef.org.uk) is the opportunity to leave a comment on the news stories that feature on the site.

This is becoming a common feature on major news-related websites (*The Guardian*, *The Daily Mail*, etc) and we believe the 'comments' facility allows people to be heard, an important aspect in gauging the feelings of members and the public on current union issues.

We believe we are the first union to take such a step, underlining the union's commitment to openness and transparency.

If you don't want to leave a comment there is also a voting facility where you can give the story a 'thumbs up' or a 'thumbs down'.

So please use the facility – and let us know what you think.

SMD REPLACEMENT IN NX REVIEWED

Neal Cooper, a member of the SMD Committee, sent this report of a meeting he, along with National Organiser Simon Weller and EC member Nigel Gibson, had last month with National Express Directors to review the introduction of competency development processes (CDP) in the company. CDP is the replacement for the much derided Specially Monitored Drivers (SMD) arrangements...

If you were a Luton Town football fan last season, you couldn't have too many points, (they started the season with minus 30 points!) but as train drivers, points have not equated to sporting success or league survival, but 'special monitoring' of our individual safety performance.

However, many drivers will now be operating under a new 'points free' Competence Development Process (CDP) which was developed last year in a joint process between ASLEF and National Express. Benefits arising are widespread and have been reported in your Journal previously. One train operating company saw

62% of train drivers undergoing special monitoring removed from the process as a result of the change to CDP. A clear indication that the old system held people on actions plans for unnecessarily long periods.

The review meeting with National Express Group looked at issues arising from the new system, particularly on NEX East Anglia, before commencing implementation on NEX East Coast.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION THE KEY

The points discussed were mostly local implementation issues, such as reluctance to deal with drivers at the lowest first stage, and the company's implementation of the 72 hour-review process for all operating incidents however trivial, which had undermined the new process. Managers defaulting to the longest timescales for development plans instead of the minimum as the guidelines suggest also caused legitimate concerns from the representatives.

Leaving Drivers to 'stew' between stages 1 and 2 for unreasonably long periods and routinely removing Drivers licences were also raised as concerns. The latter practice

smacks of the outdated 'naughty boys and girls' being taught a lesson and counterproductive when the new system's emphasis is on developing skills, not punishment.

Improved training of local managers was jointly identified as the way forward. The agreement and implementation in practice of joint training of local managers and representatives are crucial to successful application in the future.

BENEFITS OF THE NEW APPROACH

As the process rolls out across train companies nationwide Drivers will experience for themselves the benefits of this new approach. Cultures take time to change and ASLEF has embraced the post Ladbroke Grove imposition of monitoring and is now moving the process to a new level. The emphasis on development of skills and competence to keep drivers driving wherever possible following operating incidents is the industry-recognised way forward.

The experience of the companies that were earliest down the road of implementation shows that the 'points free' system works well - but successful application relies on good detailed training and on-going review.

In the future, it seems that Luton football fans will have more in common with points free train drivers. Let's hope for both groups that their respective managers up their game in the future.



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NORTHERN IMPROVE PROTECTION FOR MEDICALLY RESTRICTED DRIVERS

YOU don't often get the chance to rebalance a contract which was split for the conveniences of privatisation – but that's what we've done in Northern West as regards protecting medically restricted drivers **reports Drivers Committee West Secretary Mick Maher.**

One of the major directives for the ex-FNW side of Northern Rail is to review our current terms and conditions, and where possible improve them.

Until recently, any driver who joined the company after September 1997 would not be financially protected if they ever suffered the misfortune of being permanently displaced for medical reasons. The opportunity to change this

came in the guise of the 2008 pay award.

After months and months of management inactivity and procrastination, ASLEF's Drivers Committee West and District Organiser Colin Smith met Northern to discuss the final two outstanding items from the 2008 pay award.

These were Sunday enhanced pay and the protection of permanently medically restricted drivers who were employed in the grade after 1997.

We came close to a deal with Northern to trade the medically restricted drivers provisions for an agreement to 'swipe on'. Unfortunately, Northern withdrew from this at the eleventh hour because they felt that it was unworkable. They

insisted that swiping off duty also had to form part of any deal. We found this unacceptable because of the vague valuation Northern placed on these items.

We realised Northern were unwilling to progress these two items and resolved that the highest priority for us was the medically restricted item – so we considered what other trade might be feasible from our side. Finally, we proposed a deal to achieve protection if we amended item 51 of the DRI 'Amendment to Rostered Turn of Duty' to include that after rest days once the daily alteration sheet is posted within the correct timescale (as per DRI/local agreement).

Management still insist that Sunday enhancement must be

self-funding and we continue to argue this in on-going productivity talks.

At its May session the Executive Committee endorsed our agreement. We're grateful to them, and would like to thank all our members who were involved in bringing such a fundamental benefit to our members for the small price of an occasional phone call.

Finally, we hope that drivers on the ex-FNWT side of Northern agree that this is fabulous opportunity to financially protect any driver unfortunate enough to be permanently displaced. It offers considerable financial protection and security to drivers and their families.

This is what being ASLEF is all about.

ASLEF ACTIVE AT WALES AND SCOTTISH TUC

SPEECHES from Secretary of State for Wales Paul Murphy and TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber were politely applauded at the Wales TUC while Rhodri Morgan's valedictory address as Welsh Labour leader was extremely well received.

John Boreham spoke during the transport debate emphasising the need for the government to pressurise Network Rail into assisting the rail freight industry during the recession by bringing forward capital maintenance work while Stan Moran attacked the British National Party and pointed out

that ASLEF had risked life and limb to determine its membership by going to the European Court. In addition to meeting a range of MPs and AMs Stan was re-elected to the General Council for the fourth successive year, coming top of his section with more than 10,000 votes.

ASLEF was also to the forefront of the Scottish Trade Union Conference, moving motions on transport and pensions, and seconding proposals to improve union learning reports **Chris Barrie**, the chairman of Edinburgh No 2 branch.

The union also ran a very successful leafletting campaign at conference, handing out copies of the special Scottish edition of the Journal. We also attended fringe meetings on union learning, stopping privatisation and supporting the People's Charter.

"I would urge all branches to get involved in their local TUC trades councils and helping

ASLEF to stay at the forefront of the Scottish trade union movement

Finally I'd like to thank District Organiser Kevin Lindsay, James McGowan from head office, Hugh Bradley and Jim Baxter for their comradeship and friendship, and the firefighters' union (FBU) and Unite for their hospitality."

ANOTHER DANGEROUS YEAR TO BE A TRADE UNIONIST, SAYS ITUC

Last year was another difficult and dangerous year for trade unionists around the world with 76 murdered because of their work defending workers' rights, according to a report from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

Its Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations details abuses of workers' rights in 143 countries and says that in addition to those killed, many more trade unionists were attacked, subjected to harassment and intimidation, or arrested.

The number of killings in Colombia – the most dangerous place on earth to be a union member – reached 49, an increase of 10 on the previous year.

Elsewhere, nine trade unionists were murdered in Guatemala, four were killed in the Philippines and in Venezuela, three in Honduras, two in Nepal and one each in Iraq, Nigeria, Panama, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. In a number of cases, governments were either directly or indirectly involved in the killings.



ASLEF's delegation to the 2009 Welsh TUC in Llandudno consisted of (left to right) John Boreham (Camarthen) and District Organiser Stan Moran along with the EC's Brian Corbett



Vicky Phillips outlines changes to the ACAS guidelines at the Arkwright Road seminar

UPDATES ON GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Members of Company Councils from districts 5, 6 and 7 were updated on changes to the grievance and disciplinary procedures at a head office seminar last month reports **PETE PETROVIC** from the Virgin CC.

The changes came into effect on the 6 April and include provisions ensuring that

- Employees have a statutory right to be accompanied where the disciplinary meeting could lead to a formal warning or the taking of some other

disciplinary action.

- For grievances, the employer should arrange for a formal meeting with the employee without unreasonable delay after a grievance is received.

- Employees and companions should make every effort to attend the meeting.

Along with these changes, updates were provided highlighting changes in the application process to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA).

If members feel they may have a claim, the union advises

them to

- Speak to an ASLEF official asap, a claim needs to be submitted without delay

- Claims to have a minimum value of £1000

- Each Individuals Symptoms must have lasted at least 6 weeks

- Must have seen a doctors at least on 2 occasions

- All new claims must be made on the new style form

- Acceptance of any award must be made in writing within 90 days of the decision being issued.

These are just some of the more important features, but reps at every level need to be kept up to date with changes to these procedures. From 6 April, for example, we all have an opportunity to review each of our individual arrangements with our own TOCs and FOCs to ensure the correct Code of Practice is being applied.

Members should appreciate that the changes affect our entire membership and not just our representatives.

Further information is available at the ACAS website at www.acas.org.uk, but please don't hesitate to ask your district organiser for further assistance.

Thanks are due to National Organiser Simon Weller for arranging the event, and to Vicky Phillips and Vincent Reynolds from Thompsons solicitors for preparing and delivering the seminar.

Education for representatives is a very important part of our trade union and I hope that events such as these continue in the future.

●●● ASLEF ON THE MARCH ●●●

In Scotland George Adamson tells us the union flew the ASLEF banner at the International Workers Memorial Day held at the Summerlee Heritage Park, Coatbridge. George sent us this picture showing (left to right) Jim Baxter, George himself, Andy Jones and Jim Lafferty at the event.



Scottish branches played their part in the annual May Day parades. They are pictured here quite rightly going through a light on green!



In London ASLEF branches joined the traditional May Day parade at Clerkenwell Green. Neasden and Waterloo branches were to the fore.



ASLEF members have been busy supporting a number of events and demonstrations over the last few months. Photo: Colin Bright



Shadow practices - a dark reminder of the 1930s



It is ironic that in a time of recession employment practices that belong to the dark days of a 1930s depression have reared their ugly head. Blacklisting of trade unionists being one of them. **Victoria Phillips** of Thompsons Solicitors reports.



THE recent revelations that an organisation called the 'Consulting Association' had files on thousands of construction workers and that over 40 construction companies, many of them household names, were using them to vet applicants did not come as that much of a surprise.

The sinister activities of the Economic League, which ran blacklists of workers and enjoyed construction industry backing and financing throughout the Thatcher decades and was wound up in 1993, were unlikely to have been

altogether abandoned or forgotten.

Blacklisting creates a climate of fear. Its impact on workers, on their employment rights and on trade union rights will inevitably be more acute at a time of job losses, mounting unemployment and extreme uncertainty in the construction and other industries.

And while blacklisting is traditionally associated with identifying people according to their trade union and political activities, it is also used to discriminate against people on racial and ethnic grounds,

sexual orientation and any number of other issues.

RUMOURS AND HALF TRUTHS

Unsubstantiated allegations which blight a worker's career would shame a far less developed country than ours.

Government ministers were quick to condemn the activities of the Consulting Association, which were revealed by the Information Commissioner. But it's taken them a while to announce that they will take action to end blacklisting.

While Business Secretary Peter Mandelson's pledge is welcome, it is disappointing that the government feels it must have yet another consultation before changing the law.

The fact is that there are simple steps that the government could take that would immediately address the injustice of blacklisting.

WHAT CAN BE DONE NOW

These measures could include outlawing blacklisting by regulating against the compilation of lists such as those run by the Consulting Association. This would be an easy move for the government.

All that is required is for a power, available to the Secretary of State, already sitting on the Statute Book, to be enabled.

Section 3 of the 1999 Employment Relations Act provides that the Secretary of State may make regulations prohibiting the compilation of lists which

- contain details of members of trade unions or persons who have taken part in the activities of trade unions, and
- are compiled with a view to being used by employers or employment agencies for the

purposes of discrimination in relation to recruitment or in relation to the treatment of workers.

The section goes on to allow individuals whose details appear on blacklists to be compensated and to allow unions to take proceedings on behalf of members. The regulations extend criminal liability for the creation of blacklists to anyone who aids the offence, including employers.

NO REASON TO WAIT

In 2003 when the government consulted on the regulations a number of trade unions said that rather than wait for evidence of blacklisting, the regulations should be enacted immediately. They weren't.

In some senses, there being no evidence or knowledge of blacklisting taking place in recent years provided by those who responded to the consultation, it was predictable that the government opted against immediate enactment.

That was then and this is now. There's no need to go back and consult again.

The regulations were meant for when evidence emerged. That is the situation we now face and the time is right to bring them into effect.

The Information Commissioner says he will prosecute the Consulting Association and is considering what regulatory action to take against the household name construction companies to whom the information was seemingly supplied.

It would be tardy to say the least if the government failed to use its existing powers under the regulations to ensure that we have the structures in place to prevent a re-occurrence.

LUL PAYS FOR IGNORING DRIVER'S COMPLAINTS

LONDON UNDERGROUND was forced to pay substantial compensation to a Tube driver after it ignored complaints about dirty, hazardous train carriages.

ASLEF member Derek Walters from Watford is facing surgery on his hand after his finger was slit open by a piece of broken glass left

in the driver's cab. He thought the severe cut would heal but a hospital examination revealed he has suffered long term damage to a finger and needs an operation to reattach the nerve.

Driver Walters and his colleagues had complained about the standard of

cleanliness in the driver's cabs, but LUL ignored them. He told the Journal, 'A number of drivers, myself included, had complained about the state of the driver's cabs but nothing was done. I just hope by claiming compensation that they will finally do something to solve this problem.'

ASLEF general secretary Keith Norman says it is ludicrous that drivers with responsibility for million-pound trains endure conditions you wouldn't tolerate in a second-hand Lada.

Our member was represented by Kam Singh from Thompsons Solicitors

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2008

Under the provisions of Section 32A of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 ASLEF is obliged to provide members with a statement summarising its financial affairs.

Income and expenditure £

Total income 4,557,209

Total expenditure 4,342,895

£4,388,822 of total income comprised payments in respect of membership.

Political Income and Expenditure

The figures above include £113,667 income and £138,240 expenditure in respect of the political fund.

Salaries and Benefits

	Salary	Employer's National Insurance contributions	Pension contributions	Benefits	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
K Norman					
General Secretary	73,907	8,576	26,430	18,607	127,520
A Donnelly					
President	9,378	674			10,052
Executive Committee					
H Bradley	25,568	2,732			28,300
B Corbett	3,709	417			4,126
B Davies	7,940	886			8,826
D Calfe	8,029	360			8,389
N Gibson	29,024	3,077			32,101
T McDonald	30,094	3,353			33,447
S Weller	34,793	4,150			38,943
T Wilkinson	18,065	339			18,404

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

We have audited the financial statements of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen for the year ended 31 December 2008 which comprise the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of freehold property and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the union's members, as a body, in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the union's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the union and the union's members, as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND AUDITORS

The Executive Committee's responsibilities for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and relevant United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) are set out in the Statement of the Executive Committee's Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. We also report to you, if in our opinion, the finance paragraph contained in the Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements, if the union has not kept proper accounting records or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

BASIS OF AUDIT OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes an examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Executive Committee in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the union's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

OPINION

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with relevant United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the union's affairs as at 31 December 2008 and of its results for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and the information given in the finance paragraph contained in the Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Hard Dowdy
a trading style of:
Chantrey Vellacott DFK LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditor
LONDON
8th April 2009

IRREGULARITY STATEMENT

Under Section 32A(6a) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 we are obliged to publish the following statement. A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring or has occurred in the conduct of the financial affairs of the union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and if necessary securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with; the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the union, the auditor or auditors of the union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.

LABOUR PARTY FORUM AT ARKWRIGHT ROAD

FOLLOWING a motion passed by East Finchley and Golders Green branch, the Executive Committee last month organised a union-Labour Party Forum. The aim was to encourage ASLEF members to engage and participate in the Party at all levels.

Tony Lloyd MP, the Chair of the Parliamentary Labour Party and of the Trade Union Group of Labour MPs, urged affiliated unions to remain united in order to ensure trade union values remain at the heart of Labour's policies while Chair of Islington North constituency Labour Party Gary Heather

called for more ASLEF branches to affiliate to CLPs as a means of advancing the union's agenda at a local level.

Byron Taylor, National Officer for the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation (TULO) highlighted the many threats the union movement will face from a Conservative government such as cuts to union learning and modernisation as well as maternity and paternity pay while David Williams, Labour's Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Crewe and Nantwich, drew attention to the importance of union activists' support for local



Keith Norman thanks MPs and activists for their contributions to the political forum

candidates.

A discussion followed which heard contributions from Graham Morris, District Organiser, District 1, Marz Colombini, Executive

Committee Member for District 1 and members of Wimbledon, East Finchley and Golders Green, Croydon Tramlink, Selhurst and Salisbury branches.



THE EC SANCTIONED REST DAY WORKING ON

- Merseyrail until 31 October subject to continued monitoring by our representatives.
- First Capital Connect until 25 July
- LOROL until 26 September
- C2C until 26 December

INDUSTRIAL ACTION EAST MIDLANDS

TRAINS ASLEF members working for East Midlands trains have voted overwhelmingly to take industrial action over the current pay dispute.

The union ballot of 396 members in East Midlands Trains was in favour of industrial action and as a result the Executive Committee has called for stoppages between:

- 00.01 on Wednesday 1 July and 23.59 on Thursday 2 July
- 00.01 on Wednesday 8 July and 23.59 on Thursday 9 July
- 00.01 on Wednesday 15 July and 23.59 on Thursday 16 July with further dates to be advised.

DRS Following a ballot of members in DRS, the EC has called on members to withdraw their labour between

- 00.01 and 23.59 on 25 June
- 00.01 and 23.59 on 9 July
- 00.01 and 23.59 on 17 July with further dates to be advised.

COMPANY COUNCIL ELECTION

S. Meredith of Gidea Park branch has been elected to the NX East Anglia Company Council.

BROADBAND FOR TRAINS High-speed broadband coverage is to be extended across the whole of the UK's transport network following the release of the 'Digital Britain' report last month. This will allow passengers to make calls and browse the internet while travelling by train – and even on London's Underground.

The report proposed that Britain's transport networks should be made broadband and phone-friendly by 2012.

OVER NINE OUT OF TEN TRAINS ON TIME Network Rail said last month that in the year ending on 31 March, 90.6% of all trains ran on time. April hit an all-time punctuality record of 93.5%.

The London to Tilbury and Southend rail operator c2c was the best performer over the year with an on-time rate of 95.3%. Chiltern and Merseyrail reached the 95% mark as well.

PROGRESS ON PENSIONS

The union has concluded agreements on pensions with most companies where our members are employed. We felt it would be useful to detail the current state of play as background information for Dave Tyson's article on the following two pages:

TOC or FOC	PROGRESS
Arriva Cross Country	Negotiations Completed
Arriva Trains Wales	Negotiations Completed
C2C	Negotiations Completed
Chiltern Railway	Negotiations Completed
DB Schenker	Negotiations Completed
First Capital Connect	Negotiations Completed
First Great Western	Negotiations Completed
First Scotrail	Negotiations Completed
Freightliner Heavy Haul	Negotiations Completed
Freightliner Intermodal	Negotiations Completed
Gatwick Express	Negotiations Completed
GB Railfreight	Negotiations Completed
Island Line	Negotiations Completed
London Midland	Negotiations Completed
London Overground	Negotiations Completed
Merseyrail	Proposals in front of the EC
National Express East Anglia	Negotiations Completed
National Express East Coast	Negotiations Completed
South West Trains	Negotiations Completed
Southeastern	Negotiations Completed
Southern	Negotiations Completed
TransPennine Express	Negotiations Completed
Virgin West Coast	Proposals accepted by ASLEF:
More negotiation on Cost Neutral early retirement factors. Expecting further report.	
East Midlands Trains	Talks on-going due to issue with SMART pensions.
Hull Trains	Negotiations on-going
Serco Rail	Broadly agreed but with some ongoing issues new joiners.
Eurostar	Negotiations Completed
Northern Rail	Negotiations on-going.

RAIL PENSIONS – THE



Dave Tyson is a former ASLEF President who is now a union-nominated director of the Railways Pension Scheme. We asked him to assess the state of our pensions in light of the economic down-turn and the 'credit crunch'. The key question, of course, is 'Is my pension safe?' Happily, Dave is not as pessimistic as we may have feared ...

NO matter how young any of us may be, or feel - retirement is not too far away. It is vital for us all to make preparations for the future, and to ensure our families are provided for in the event of our early death. Pensions have had a bad press over the past few years, and our contribution rates are under pressure, mainly due to the global economic crisis.

Despite this I have no hesitation in declaring that anybody who tells you that occupational pensions are worthless is misguided. They are not. They benefit us by offering, for example

- tax free contributions.
- employer contributions up to one-and-a-half times employee contributions.
- Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) matching and a 12 to 1 conversion
- generous early retirement factors and level pension options
- death in service benefits and dependant benefits
- ill health benefits

But the question of most concern to all members is, 'Is my pension safe - and will there be any money left when I retire?'

CRISIS IN 2008

Unless you have been living on the moon over the past year, you'll know that stock markets have taken a severe battering. It's my job, along with my fellow trustees, experts from financial services company rpmi and the employers to ensure that there's money in the scheme to provide pensions for those in retirement now; and for those who will one day retire.

That's why every three years the scheme assets are valued against its liabilities. If the assets are more than the liabilities the scheme is in surplus, if the assets are less than the liabilities the scheme is in deficit.

At the end of 2004 because of poor investment conditions, the scheme was in deficit. As a result contribution rates were raised in most cases to around 10.5% for employees and to 15% for employers. AVC matching was paid either from reserves in

the scheme or, rather reluctantly, by the employers.

In the following three years the deficits were, in most cases, cleared. In fact as the 2007 valuation process began, things were looking much brighter. Our investment-giving returns stood at some £600 million in 2006 and a total of £1.1 billion was returned to the scheme.

Midway through 2008, however, world markets began to collapse - and we were obviously concerned at the impact this would have on the Scheme. We employ actuaries to advise us on matters like this. It is their job to evaluate the likelihood of future events and analyzes the financial consequences of risk. At the time our people - along with most others - felt that this could be a blip and we were best advised to wait and see what happened.

In September 2008 it became apparent that the 2007 valuation process needed to take market conditions into account. This has been reflected in our contributions. Trustees and employer turned their attention to how rates could be kept down.

HOLDING ONTO OUR BENEFITS

As employees we want to retain the benefits I referred to above - but they have to be paid for. My job as a trustee is to apply the rules - which is a straight 60/40 split regardless of the deficit. In most cases this has led to employees' contributions remaining at 10.5%.

Exceptions are where sections have been closed to new employees where rates are on average 3% higher. In some sections where employee rates have risen over 16%, employers, recognising employees will not pay this, have injected cash to keep rates affordable. This is welcome ... but rare.

The consultation process has now finished in most RPS sections and by now members should have been informed of their rate from July.

Our focus as trustees is on present and future market conditions. The collapse of world markets meant the value of the scheme is down by about 40%. Many

analysts doubt that growth will return this year, and most feel any recovery will be slow and lengthy.

HOW YOUR TRUSTEES WORK

The trustees' job is to protect the Scheme's investments and to assist us we employ over 40 investment firms who put our money into a variety of markets including

- UK equities
- global equities
- bonds
- emerging markets
- property
- cash
- infrastructure
- commodities

Each of these managers is set a benchmark, and we constantly monitor how they are doing. Last year we trustees removed £4 billion worth of assets from three underperforming fund managers. We buy into a broad spectrum of investments, and have a clear statement of principles for investment managers about how we expect them to invest our money. In addition we have policies on social and environmental issues.

In fact global warming may well have a serious effect on world markets in terms of making oil and water scarce, food yields diminish and adding potential for global unrest. Our corporate governance people make sure companies we invest in are acting responsibly. Rpmi is a signatory to the Carbon Disclosure Project, a not-for-profit organisation concerned with investment and climate change.

We also, because we have shares in major companies like Vodafone, BP, Nestle, Nokia and Microsoft, can, with other pension funds, influence issues like salaries and bonuses paid to company directors.

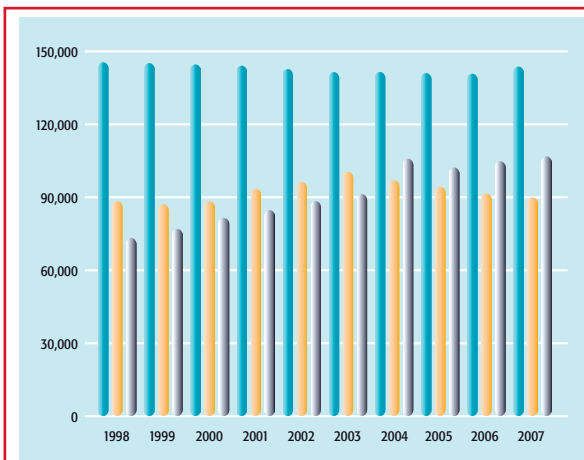
TRUST THAT YOU'RE PROTECTED

I'd like to speak about some of the protection that trustees can offer when we deal with the employers - actual and potential - in the RPS.

To begin with, if you are employed by a Train Operating Company (TOC), then I would say you have one of the safest pension funds in the UK. Most of the employers are strong (the trustees measure the 'covenant' or strength of each company through a rigorous process), each company is given a rating and that is taken into account when dealing with the three-yearly valuation.

In fact, if a TOC went bust or handed

CRUNCH AND BEYOND



The scheme received £574m (2006 – £533m) of contributions in 2007 and paid out benefits of £733m (2006 – £690m). Under the Pensions Act 1995 it is the responsibility of each employer to pay contributions on time.
 Source: Railways Pension Scheme Annual Report and Accounts 2007

Scheme. Due to current market conditions, it is down from £19 billion in 2007 to about £14 billion at the end of 2008. In the past few months it has even dipped below that figure.

My message to all of you is that this is not a time for panic.

The markets are beginning to recover, the FTSE has made strong gains and on the positive side, contributions made to the scheme when the markets are low were used to buy shares cheaply. I'm confident that growth will return.

We currently have 340,000 members in the RPS. Of these, 94,000 are active - and that number is falling. I believe we should be working the employer to encourage employees to join the Scheme and that is why I submitted evidence to the Pension Commission calling for compulsory membership. This, like much union evidence, was ignored.

Finally I'm under no illusion that there will be difficult decisions to be made about funding the Scheme. But ASLEF members have proved time after time that we are prepared to stand up and fight to protect our pensions. I'm confident the union is well-positioned and strong enough to rise to any challenge to face us in the future.

As your trustee I can assure you I'll do all I can to ensure your interests are protected for now, and into the future.

the keys of the franchise back to government, then the DfT would run the company until a new employer was found. You can't get a better guarantee than that!

In some cases a new employer will emerge. A good example is the acquisition of Freightliner by Arcapita. When the trustees were made aware of the bid by the Middle East-based investment firm, we did a covenant assessment which revealed that the new owner would be weaker than the vendor. We felt a weaker employer would increase the likelihood of members having to pay increased contributions. Accordingly we argued for more money to be put into the

scheme to keep employee contributions at their current rate. Why, we asked, should employees pay more into the pension scheme as a result of a take over?

It wasn't easy, but eventually the new employer agreed to make considerable cash payments into the fund over an agreed period.

These sorts of things go unnoticed – but they are extremely important for the protection of the scheme and its members.

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

I'd like to touch for a moment on the current value of the Railway Pension

DETERMINED COLLETTE MOVED FROM WARD TO FOOTPLATE

Collette Gibson is a determined woman. She wanted to work in the rail industry, set her sights on being a driver - and she's overcome more obstacles than you'll find in the Olympic hurdles to achieve it.

'It's often been a rough road, and at times I felt like giving up. But one memory that has sustained me over the years was a woman I didn't know who came up to me and said, 'I know we've never met, but I know about the battles you've had - and it's been a real encouragement to other women in the industry and brought about a major change in how management treat us.' Suddenly it all felt worthwhile.'

Collette's first job after picking up three A levels was as a trainee nurse. 'It was a rewarding job that I enjoyed,' she says. 'But I qualified at an early age and worried too much about the responsibilities. It was really life and death, and I was too young to deal with it.'

'I left my home town of Portsmouth and took an office job with British Rail in London.'

But if she hoped that the railways would prove a less stressful life, Collette was wrong. It was quite the opposite. Within a few years she had been forced to leave the industry twice - but it's a tribute to her persistence - a trade unionist's greatest virtue - that each time she bounced back.

'I got to two Industrial Tribunals (now Employment Tribunals) and I came away from both with a deep sense of injustice. On both occasions I was represented by the RMT but I don't entirely blame that union. There was an ingrained prejudice against women in the industry at the time. It's being gradually eroded, but there's still work to do.'

Collette had been working on the railway for three years when she became serious about becoming a driver. During her training, as she'd had experience in the industry, she became unofficial spokesperson for her dozen-strong group - and it wasn't appreciated by management.



Collette - from solitary victim to respected union activist.

To cut a long story short, she was accused of 'having a bad attitude'. She was told 'her face didn't fit' and shown the door.

'It got as far as a tribunal, but the Chairman suggested it would be best settled out of court. Connex realised this was going to be the best option for their already-tarnished reputation, and got the cheque-book out. The experience left me with no heart for a battle and I agreed.'

Little did Collette know that worse was to come.

'I didn't want to be forced out of the industry, so I took a job on buffets at Euston, and moved on to working as a conductor. Again, I don't want to go into details, but a year later I was back at an IT. The person who was supposed to be training me began by making indecent suggestions, and finally he made an indecent assault on me.'

'I was humiliated and depressed - and in the end I was very, very angry. I was in the RMT and so I went to them again for advice. We went through the same steps, and once again I was offered an out of court settlement. This time I wanted to go through the process because I wanted to

shame this man - especially when I discovered I wasn't the first woman he'd assaulted.'

'I was devastated at how it all ended. The RMT said it wouldn't represent me if I didn't take the settlement money, and the man who attacked me was sacked but later reinstated on appeal. They said he was just 'a lady's man'. I felt really sick and dreadfully let down.'

Many people would have turned away at that desperately low point. But not Collette. She refused to give in, and went to Kings Cross as a trainee driver, where at last the light began to shine. She met people - like Les Muir and Andy Catogno - who wanted to encourage her, rather than attack her. They persuaded her to stand for the LDC, which she did ('after a couple of vodkas!') and she found herself no longer a solitary victim, but a respected union activist.

'Before long I was not only on the LDC but also a delegate to the Woman's TUC.'

'I've realised the value of unions most of my life, certainly since I took an O Level in sociology. I was even a local NUPE rep when I was a student nurse, but I didn't think I'd be able to work at anything except

Would you be prepared to be featured in future editions of this column, or know someone who would be a good subject? If you do, please let us know at the ASLEF Journal, 9 Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB or journal@aslef.org.uk



at a local level. This wasn't because I felt I couldn't – my confidence was growing all the time – but because being a woman is still a barrier to being an activist.

'Women are, even in so-called 'enlightened' circles, still the 'first carer'. We are expected to put home before work. It is much more difficult for women. Even the best fathers tend to see looking after children as something of a favour.

'That's the main reason I'm active on ASLEF's women's committee. There's a long way to go before women will really be equal, and you have to start where you are. For me it's as a train driver. I want to argue for more women to be recruited to the footplate and to be given every opportunity to retain their jobs.

'Does that make me an extremist? I can't see why it should.

'I'm lucky. I have an understanding husband and supportive parents. This allows me to be both a mother and an activist – not to mention a person. But I know there are many more women whose potential is lost. They are the people I want to do something for.'

She may not know it, but she's already done a great deal. Standing up for yourself and your colleagues is something that gives others the confidence to demand things for themselves. People you don't know – like that stranger who spoke to her many years ago.

ALL PRESENT AND CORRECT AT HITHER GREEN

DURING my pleasurable visit to Hither Green's 2009 reunion, the Branch Secretary asked me to represent the General Secretary and make presentations to the following members:

- Dave Spencer Head Office Retirement Certificate after 43 years at Hither Green.
- Geoff Lank, Head Office retirement certificate.
- Dave Atkinson, 30 year badge.
- Steve Bates, 25 Year badge.
- Mark Stevens, 5 Year Badge.



Peter (P.J.) Smith (second left) stands in to make the presentations at Hither Green. Pic: Dave Weddle

My thanks for the hospitality of the Hither Green Branch, to the caterers for the fine spread, and the staff at

the Railway Club who ensured we did not go dry.
Peter Smith – Reporter - RMS

STRATFORD COMES TO HAMPSTEAD

ON 9 April Stratford Branch paid a visit to Arkwright Road along with our brothers from Preston Branch.

We were met on arrival by Dave Bennett who had taken time out from his day to be our 'tour guide', showing us round this truly magnificent building, with its deeply rooted history and memorabilia showcasing the different ages and eras of ASLEF. He showed us the various departments which make up the 'nerve centre' of our union, introducing us to the ever so welcoming and friendly staff, who work tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of the union for the benefit of us all.

We also had the pleasure of meeting the EC and the EC President who explained what goes on behind the scenes, and what issues are currently happening around the country. Once the tour was over, we were treated to a superb lunch in a nearby establishment.

The EC, General Secretary and some of the staff took time out to also socialise with us which was an extremely nice touch, and a lovely end to an enjoyable day. On behalf of the Stratford branch I'd like to thank all the staff at Head Office who took time to explain what goes on, the General Secretary for everything,



Stratford take a step up!

including the lunch, the EC members, Dave Bennett for the great tour... and of course, to all those others who made the

day possible. Thank you from us all.

John Thorpe – Reporter – Stratford Branch

RAY RUTTY – 50 NOT OUT



Retired Stratford member Ray Rutty was presented with a 50-year medallion at a recent get-together of our retired members.

Ray spent his entire railway career at Stratford depot. He began as a cleaner in July 1948, qualifying as a driver eleven years later. During his long career, Ray drove steam, diesel and electric traction.

When he retired in September 1993 he was working as an inter-city driver on the Liverpool Street to Norwich route.

Ray has been an ASLEF member throughout his career. When he was on strike in 1955 he lived close enough to the depot to ensure that pickets were well supplied with tea and coffee.

P. J. DODGSON – Secretary – Stratford Branch

EDINBURGH SAYS FAREWELL TO FLASH GORDON

THE Polton Inn on 29 May saw another great turnout from the members of Edinburgh No1 Branch - this time to say farewell to Gordon "Flash" Halliday.

Gordon decided to take early retirement after 27 years at Millerhill; and as is usual, the branch gave him a fantastic send-off.

Gordon started his railway career in 1982 as a guard, and then became a Trainman D with the introduction of the Trainman's Concept in 1988; eventually he gained promotion to driver in 1991. Gordon joined ASLEF as soon as he could, and regularly attended Branch meetings when his shifts allowed.

His nickname Flash, is very much tongue in cheek; he was known to take his time when it came to train driving; nothing at all wrong with that, until you ended up following him up the East Coast Main Line from Tyne on the nightshift!

Seriously though, Gordon was universally liked at the depot; in the 24 years I've been at the depot, I've never heard of him falling out with anyone. He was always quite happy to come to his work and get on with it, just as long as he had time for a few cups of his treasured tea during his shift.

His popularity was evident when we held a collection for his retirement gift. The generosity of his workmates allowed us to book Gordon and his wife Sheila a 2 night stay in the Royal Hotel in York, with tickets for York races included. And there was still enough money left to provide



Edinburgh No 1 turn out in force to say farewell to a friend

some spending money for their trip. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed. Yet again Edinburgh No.1 Branch did itself proud.

District Organiser Kevin Lindsay kindly attended to present Gordon with a retirement certificate, an ASLEF plaque, and an ASLEF mug. I'm sure the mug will be well used!

The day wouldn't have been complete without one of Pushy's poems; once again he came up with the goods, bringing the house down at the end of the presentation.

Gordon did seem overwhelmed at the turnout and the gifts he received. All I can say is - you deserved it, mate!

On behalf of the boys from the Hill, we wish Gordon and Sheila a long and happy retirement. We hope you bet a few



A view through the keyhole as District Organiser Kevin Lindsay does the honours

winners at the races - I'm sure Tam Allan will provide you with a few tips before you go.

Gary Hart - LLC Secretary - Millerhill

WESTBURY CELEBRATE 130 YEARS OF SERVICE

On 4 May the monthly meeting of the Westbury branch took place in the local Labour club.

Members were pleased that our recently elected National Organiser, and former Westbury driver, Brother Simon Weller, was able to accept our invitation to attend.

After the routine branch business the Chairman Paul Foulger introduced our guest who gave members a wide-ranging and informative report including major issues such as pensions, the effects of the recession on the rail industry, the ASLEF membership driver, political campaigns and ASLEF's improving financial position.

Simon then responded to members questions and lastly made the following presentations at the behest of the

Chairman

- Bob Laing – 10 year membership badge
- Ray Gooding – 20 years
- Andy Gentle – 30 years
- Andy West – 35 years
- Roger Matthews – 35 years
- Steve Davies – a branch

gift of two railway themed books in recognition of his efforts on FGW and previously Wessex Trains Company Councils following his recent resignation for personal reasons.

• Howie Reynolds – a branch gift of an engraved tankard and a framed copy of a suitably completed FGW form requesting an explanation as to why his train was again three minutes late! Howie is the FGW driver local rep and is about to retire. His efforts on behalf of driver colleagues and his antics



Long serving ASLEF Westbury members with National Organiser Simon Weller. (Left to right) Bob Laing, Andy West, Ray Gooding, Roger Matthews, Howie Reynolds, Simon Weller, Steve Davies and Andy Gentle

in the mess room will be missed by most – if not all – his victims! Thank you Howie – we wish you a long, healthy and happy retirement..

The Chairman then thanked

Simon for attending, closed the meeting and we all retired to the bar for a few beers and a buffet.

Steve Davies – Vice-Chairman – Westbury Branch



NEW YEAR RHINE CRUISE

INCLUDES: New Year's Eve party night with champagne at midnight • New Year's Day Gala dinner • Stays in Rudesheim, Koblenz & Cochem • Visit to Magical Moselle sightseeing tour with wine tasting • 3 nights' accommodation in a twin bedded en suite Grade 1 cabin • Full Board on board • Welcome drink, party night & Captain's Dinner • Entertainer on board • Complimentary tea and coffee • Return coach travel and transfers throughout • Return ferry/ Eurotunnel crossings • Services of a Phoenix Holidays Cruise Manager

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WHAT THE UNION WAS DOING 100 AND 50 YEARS AGO

Our delving into back numbers of the Journal this month gives a wonderful picture of life before the telly, and reminds us of those old days when all shares did was shoot up in value ...

100 YEARS AGO

The July 1909 Journal carried a splendid account by 'Late But In Earnest'(!) about the Southall Branch's way of saying farewell to a member leaving the industry ...

"This branch has just been giving a brotherly send off to one of its members in the person of Jimmy Llewellyn, who has gone to seek better fortune on a railway in West Africa. We held a smoking concert as a farewell, at which we presented our brother with a very neat dressing case. It was a pouring wet night, but a goodly company assembled, and was presided over by Mr. S. Daneals, retired engineman, with Mr. C. Pilgrim in the vice-chair. Songs were rendered by Brothers Roser, Bailey, Bromley, Moody, Mr. Jones, an old schoolmate of Brother Llewellyn, and others, and a most enjoyable evening was spent, thanks to the management of Brothers Oakley and R. Jones. The presentation was made by our secretary, Brother Bromley, who feelingly expressed our regret at parting with Brother Llewellyn, and our wishes for his future success. Brother Llewellyn made an attempt to reply, but completely broke down, and we gladly accepted the will for the deed. Our locomotive foreman, Mr. T. Smith, who honoured us with his presence, made a brief speech, and stated how sorry he was to part with our brother, who had borne a good character as an engineman. Brother Llewellyn is retaining his membership of our Society. The evening closed with clasped hands and "Auld Lang Syne."

50 YEARS AGO

In July 1959 George McCarthy of the Daily Herald wrote a piece in the Journal calling for a capital gains tax because share prices kept going up ...

"The outlook for some major sections of British industry, like shipping, shipbuilding, coal and cotton, may not be bright. But there is one old market square where the boom goes on and on – the Stock Exchange.

Why should share prices continue to go up? I cannot answer. But neither can anybody else.

There are one or two obvious causes. One is the new flow of money through the unit trusts and the increased funds at the disposal of insurance companies and other institutional investors.

It is true, too, that some American houses, finding British equities more and more attractive, are steadily investing here.

But the continuing rise in share prices is astonishing. It is only recently – to take one example – that I mentioned that the £1 Ford Motor shares were a fair investment at 58s.

The current price is about 64s. A year ago it was 33s 6d.

This seems to be the right moment to impose a capital gains tax. But be easy, speculators all. There is no likelihood of that.

The Conservative cry is "Every man is a capitalist" – so long, of course, as some have more capital than others."

*Extracts selected and edited
by Jane Pimlott*

TRIBUNE




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PAUL SUMMERFIELD – ONLY 47

Paul Summerfield, former Woking Driver and latterly Operations Resource Manager at Waterloo tragically passed away suddenly on 10 December – his 47th Birthday.

Paul followed in his father Ron's footsteps and started his Railway Career in 1979 at Woking as a Traction Trainee. He was appointed as a Driver in 1988 having spent many years as a Relief Driver/Passed Man.

Paul was always ready to help and assist anyone with problems - family, friends or colleagues. This was reflected in his sterling work over the years for Woking Branch Depot, Guildford BRSA Railway Club and the Southern Region National Association of Railway Clubs.

Paul served as Woking's ASLEF Branch Secretary for many years and represented the depot as an LDC Representative. He was also prevalent within the Social Committee for Woking Footplate Staff and assisted Woking Homes, a convalescence home for retired Railwaymen just along the road from Woking station.

Paul will be deeply missed by all who knew and worked with this true railwayman over the years.

Our thoughts and sympathy go to Paul's family and close friends. His funeral on 22 December was very well attended – a fitting tribute to a man who gave so much of his time and assistance to others.

Rest In Peace, Paul.

Mick Berg/Brian Pickett -
Woking Branch

BILL TONGE – LIKED AND RESPECTED

It is with sadness that I report the death of retired Driver Bill Tonge at the age of 74 years. He began his long career in the loco grade in 1951 and retired at 65 in the year 2000.

Bill moved to Newton Heath as his preference at the closure of Patricroft Depot in 1968 and retired from Manchester Victoria. Bill was well-liked and respected, a fine work

colleague who was a credit to his profession.

Our thoughts go to Bill's wife and family at this sad time.

S. Black – RMS – Newton
Heath

STEVE CASEY – HUNDERSTON LOSS

It is with deep regret that I have to inform you of the loss of Steve Casey, a fellow colleague and a friend.

Steve started his railway driving career in May 2002 at Wembley depot, transferring to Hunterston early in 2005.

Our condolences are with his family at such a tragic time, as well as his friends and fellow workmates who also miss him.

Evan Lowe

Hunterston Branch Secretary

STEVE CLARK – HEART ATTACK AT 49

It is with sadness that I report the untimely passing of St Pancras driver Bro Steve Clark. He was only 49 when he suffered a fatal heart attack.

Steve joined the railway in 1976 and worked on the footplate at Cricklewood, Euston, St Pancras and latterly at Euston for London Overground. He was always a loyal ASLEF member, and held a number of positions in the branch over the years. He had been an AAD delegate on occasions, and as a health and safety rep he attended the Hazards conference. He had also served as a Local Level

rep, and been secretary of District Council No.6

As St Pancras Branch Secretary for many years, he combined his knowledge of technology and his dedication to ensure branch business was well organised and efficient. Outside work, he enjoyed travel, had a passion for Spurs, and was a member of CAMRA. Our sincere sympathies and condolences go to his family at this difficult time.

Rebekah Peterson –

Secretary - St Pancras Branch

LITTLEHAMPTON LOSES DRIVERS LOVELL AND MORGAN

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of two Littlehampton retired drivers.

Alec Lovell, a former Nine Elm's footplate man, moved to Littlehampton to become a motorman, passed away on 20 March after a short illness. Alec was always a dedicated Chelsea fan. His funeral took place on 3 April at Findon Crematorium in Worthing. It was well attended by family and former workmates of all grades. I did hear that Alec could be seen riding his bicycle around town until recently, but a year or so ago he took to an electric 3mph machine.

The funeral of Bob Morgan took place at the same venue on 7 April. Again it was very well attended by family, former

workmates of all grades and the landlord of Bob's 'local' on the Isle of Wight. Bob suffered a tragic accident on the River Medina when he was moving from his dingy to his new 40 ft boat. ASLEF was well represented including President Alan Donnelly and General Secretary Keith Norman, who said some comforting words on Bob's behalf at the services. Fifty years had elapsed since Bob's start on British Rail at Brighton as a loco cleaner on 23 April 1959. Moving through the grades he went to Addiscombe in 1966 and a year later to Bognor. Littlehampton was his next port of call in 1988. When he was made redundant there he moved to Barnham in 1995.

Later he took the position of shed shunt driver at Littlehampton and retired a little under a year ago.

Ian Munro – Retired Driver

PAUL ABRAMS – A VARIED RAIL CAREER

It is with great sadness that I report the sudden death of Paul Abrams.

'Big Paul' was a member of ASLEF for over 40 years and was secretary of the East Finchley Branch for a number of years.

Paul joined London Transport in 1968 as an apprentice at East Finchley. His first position was a 'Box Boy' before progressing to Station Assistant, Guard, then Driver. In 1986, Paul became an

CHARLIE EDWARD ('TWINKLE TOES') CROTHERS – REQUEST NOT FORGOTTEN



The nick-name remains a mystery

BORN in County Down, Ireland, Charlie came to England to live with his sister and started on the railway at Top Shed, where he worked through to become a driver. When Top Shed closed he moved to Kings Cross where I had the pleasure of working with him on many occasions, and never had a dull day. Charlie was always ready for a laugh and joke.

He didn't lay about in his retirement. He did a spell as a lollipop man, worked as a hospital porter and ran an allotment. Late last year the wound would not heal from an operation, so he had to return to hospital regularly for treatment. His final visit was after he collapsed at home. After further tests they diagnosed lung cancer, from which Charlie unfortunately never recovered.

So what about the origin of his nick-name? That's going to remain within his circle of family and work colleagues. When Charlie turned 80 he said, 'Don't forget to put it in the Journal!'. Unfortunately two years later he has got his wish.

Our condolences to Marianne, their children and his sister and relations. May he RIP.

Peter Smith - RMS Reporter

ROBERT HARDINGHAM – A TRUE GENTLEMAN

It is with great sadness that I have to report that Driver Robert Hardingham died of cancer in St Michael's Hospice, St Leonards on Sea, on Wednesday 14 May.

Robert joined the railway in January 2000 and loved every minute of it. He frequently said that it was the best job, with the best workmates, that he'd ever had. The truth is Robert was the nicest man you ever could meet; he was a shining light who always had a kind and reassuring word for everyone. He retired due to ill health in January this year as he was suffering from terminal cancer. Robert died at only 53, leaving behind his wife and three children.

To say Robert's death is a tragedy is an understatement. Hastings and the surrounding depots will miss him dearly - but never forget him.

Robert can be summed up with these few words: brave, dignified and a true gentleman.

SIMON JENNER – Secretary - Hastings Branch



The Hastings Branch made a presentation to Robert shortly before his death.

Inspector based at Camden Town until it closed and then he moved back to East Finchley to become Duty Manager of Trains. He was in charge of filming projects on the north end of the Northern Line, which involved overseeing TV and film crews when the stations or trains were being used in television adverts and films.

Paul was a committee member for the Richard Cloudesely Children's School, which caters for children with severe physical disabilities. He raised thousands of pounds for the school over the years.

In September 2008, he retired due to ill health and moved from Barnet to the Brighton area to be near his family. Sadly, Paul was taken ill, and died suddenly on 6 April.

Paul had a very dry sense of humour – and no one was immune to it, regardless of their position! He was 'old school', and there was nothing he didn't know about running the desk. And if you'd messed up, you couldn't wish for a better manager to deal with it.

His funeral was a testament to his popularity; the crematorium was standing room only.

Paul will be sorely missed by all his friends and colleagues.

Deborah Reay - East Finchley/Golders Green Branch

DENNIS STONE

More than 200 people attended the funeral of retired Ashford driver Dennis Stone at the village of Hawkinge near Folkestone on Wednesday 29 April.

Among the group paying their respect were about 50 retired drivers - which showed the very high esteem in which Dennis was held. He was a well known character throughout the southeastern region and although he took early retirement in the early 90's, stories of his escapades still echo in the mess rooms to this day.

Dennis joined the railway in the early 50's at Ashford Loco as a cleaner and fireman before moving to Redhill to get his appointment as driver in 1960/61. He returned to Ashford in 1966 where he held court until his retirement. He passed away on 17 April aged 79. Although he has gone, Dennis will never be forgotten.

Perry Calvert – Secretary – Ashford Branch

ROBIN PRINCE - MBE, JP, RIP

In January ex-Hither Green and Gillingham driver Robin (Bob) Prince, passed away after a long fight with cancer. He was 60 and had been diagnosed

with this ailment back in 2002, but carried on working until December last year.

Bob started his railway career as a porter at Clock House but soon transferred to Hither Green Loco as a cleaner. He was one of the group who were the last to be trained as fireman with a period on the Ashford Works USA tanks. Bob transferred to Gillingham mixed traction but to go on with driver seniority, he moved to West Croydon. Consequently moved to Gillingham again and finally Hoo Junction saw Bob become a traction inspector.

As the industry changed, Bob 'took the package' but missed the railways and became involved with a small freight logistics company. This led him being in charge of training loco crews on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction at Beechbrook near Ashford. It was at this time he was diagnosed with his illness.

Throughout this time he kept going against all the odds.

IN 2007 he was instrumental in helping to get a new mainline freight company up and running. It was in this year Bob received an MBE for services to the railway industry and society through his work as a JP at Maidstone. Bob received his medal from the deputy Lord Lieutenant at a gathering of

family, friends and old workmates at Maidstone hospital, four days before he passed away.

His funeral was well attended by many of his former work colleagues, a veritable 'Who's Who' of the footplate world. A Class 37 loco is to be named in his memory on the Spa Valley Railway in July. Bob and his great sense of humour are sadly missed.

Glenn Roofthoof – Driver - Coulsdon

JOHN BIRKETT - ALWAYS A HELPING HAND

John Birkett originally hailed from Immingham and became a fitters apprentice at Doncaster before joining the footplate, becoming a Driver in 1951.

During his spell in the army he was given the prime job of Bomb Disposal! He married Mary in 1961 and four years later he came to Kings Cross and they set up home in Hatfield. When he retired, John helped Mary with their local church and he was always on hand to help his neighbours out with shopping and anything else. Our condolences go to Mary, their children, friends and relations.

Peter Smith - Reporter - RMS

ROY HEAD - A TOUCHING END

Roy started his Railway career at Kings Cross top shed and moved through the ranks to become a Driver. Later he had to take up the post of List Clark. Roy's passion was horse-racing (a hobby many would call 'the bookies' friend!). He was well liked and respected by his colleagues. It was ironic that Roy, at the age of 76, ended up in the next hospital bed to Charlie Crothers suffering from the 'Big C'. As Charlie related, at 0430 he heard Roy move, went to him and asked if he was OK. Roy took Charlie's hand, shook it – and then moved into the top link. Our condolences to Roy's wife and family. May he RIP.

Peter Smith – Reporter - RMS



YOU TELL US

These are the pages where you talk to us. We welcome your letters, either by mail to the Journal at 9 Arkwright Road London NW3 6AB or by email to journal@aslef.org.uk

Because of our space constraints, please try to keep your contributions as short as you can.

This month we continue our STAR LETTER feature. The immensely lucky winner will pocket a rich range of ASLEF regalia!

LET'S END THE ERA OF PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS

RECENT events in the Palace of Westminster have rocked our political system to the core and proved that many, though not all, politicians are no better than common benefit cheats or fraudsters such as Robert Maxwell. Many of them have spent far too long in the political system and are divorced from the reality of day to day life that faces the average citizen in the UK.

How can some of these pious politicians from all parties lecture the nation on morals when they have had their snouts in the trough and then say they have done nothing wrong and that everything they have claimed for was 'within the rules'.

Over the past decades we have seen the emergence of the professional politician who in general are people from 'professional' backgrounds and with a university or private education. The selection process to become a Labour candidate for parliament seems to have reflected this trend with

fewer and fewer working class people being selected. Where are the factory workers, nurses, transport workers etc. people from working class backgrounds who know what it is like to live with the pressures of modern life, why are they not in the house of commons and the lords? In my view it is time for the unions and electorate to kick back and let the Labour Party know that we want to see more honest working class people representing the people; and that those who have screwed the system should be barred from holding office and new candidates appointed.

The irony of all this is that it was a Labour Government that created the Freedom of Information Act and it has, in this case, done an excellent job in exposing such shameful behaviour; sadly it looks like this government will be hoist with its own petard at the next election.

If Brown is going to wait until next year to call an election, which I think is his best option, let's see the union movement forging ahead with demands for new MP's from our backgrounds - because if there is no change in the selection process and greater scrutiny of MP's the next election will see the rise in popularity of the far

right which will be a disaster for our country.

Dave Tyson - Norwich

MEMORIES FROM THE IRON STEED

MAY I offer a trifling frippery of when I was an ASLEF passed fireman in the old steam days?

A good route card was the secret for passed men to get off the 'blade' and into their boyhood dream of being an engine driver for the day.

Driving a steam locomotive sorted the men from the boys - especially when it was foggy! Remember engines created their own fog and smoke and the massive boiler blocked half your vision of singles. I've seen

lion-hearted men become lambs, some hiding in tenders! And when this little Napoleon was offered a main line driving job, and the fog was as thick as a Tory back-bencher, I would look down from my iron steed and say, 'Not tonight Josephine!'

All the best to you all at Arkwright Road

John Anthony - Retired member

THANKS TO THE UNION

MAY I take this opportunity to thank ASLEF for its support during recent events? Without

(continued on page 22)

Change of address form

Name.....

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.....

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Branch.....

Membership No.....

Employer.....

LETTERS to the EDITOR

the expert advice and excellent help of Mick Whelan, I really don't know where I would be at this present moment.

It proves beyond doubt that membership of the ASLEF is paramount for all in the driving grades. I would also like to thank Richie Cash for his representation.

G. L. Owen - Driver -
Machynlleth

EXASPERATION IN FREIGHT

I HAVE to express my dismay and exasperation at the 'pay offer' for Freightliner Intermodal drivers. It would appear we were balloted for strike action to achieve a 0% pay rise!

The current 'offer', initially made last autumn, amounts to that – and it is now being proposed for 2010 and not even linked to any potential rise in inflation. It's already been reported by those in the finance sector that when economic recovery starts, inflation could hit over 6%.

I am aware these are 'tough times' but our pay claim is based on last year's performance so surely we should deal with the present economic problems in the next pay round?

Although there is no desire to 'sell' conditions, or have the

working arrangement of some other freight companies, there is a feeling that amongst Intermodal drivers that we are getting left way behind in the pay league. Compared to some others we may have 'conditions' – but this does not compensate for the amount of driving we do in terms of mileage and duration (mostly on 66s!) and also doesn't recognize the unsocial nature of our turns.

Management's 'chestnut' of Intermodal drivers not having much work at weekends doesn't hold much water, as Freightliner have a seven-day DRI with Sunday in the working week – but with half the rail network shot at weekends for engineering work, it's virtually impossible to run a service!

For a company that prided itself in having good industrial relations, it seems sadly lacking in some quarters now – although locally we are pretty fortunate in that respect.

Although to hear the way some managers talk about their drivers is demoralizing – but they are quick enough to assume favours will be done when things go wrong!

We are told by our management that we must perform professionally and responsibly and they expect us to be conscientious and 'flexible' – but they seem intent on making us the cheapest drivers on the railway.

A number of concessions have been made to Freightliner (such as our 'mod' agreement) with no recognition on our salary.

We were told on the ballot letter that 'enough is enough'. Well – yes. Enough is enough!

J. P. Morgan - Ipswich

THANKS FROM MARATHON MAN

I WOULD like to thank all branches who responded and supported me in my recent appeal for sponsorship.

I ran the London Marathon on the 26 April in 3 hours 48 mins in aid of the Martlets Hospice in Hove, East Sussex. Thanks to your generosity I raised £5,322.

This was gratefully received

by the hospice and will go some way to help with the sterling work they do to enable the terminally ill to die with dignity.

Once again a big thank you
Mark Johnson - Driver -
FCC Brighton

ASLEF PEAKS IN CHARITY CALL

I WOULD like to thank all ASLEF members for the marvellous support you have given for my charity efforts of taking up the Three Peaks challenge.

I am delighted with the money you have given to the Railway Children both from branches and as individuals. Many thanks.

Andy Savage - Deputy
Chief Inspector - RAIB

BRANCHING OUT AT BARKING

ON behalf of Barking Mainline branch, I would like to offer our

thanks to ASLEF for being understanding and helpful in getting our branch up and running again.

We were close to losing our own identity as a branch but now have a very active team of representatives who are dedicated to giving our members the support they need in times of trouble.

We've now held our first official branch meeting with a very good turn out and I'd like to thank Bro Nigel Gibson for taking the time to attend and to assist us in our first steps into the world of a union rep. Big thanks to Tony Yates-Watson for assisting us with our finances, District 5 for being patient and helping us get our affiliation fees up to date and most of all to all members of Barking Mainline for being supportive and having the confidence in us for getting our independence back as a branch.

Andy Hymas – Secretary -
Barking Mainline Branch

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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CITY OF LONDON BADGES, one 10-year and one depot badge. Depot badges are numbered 1-150. There are only 150 of each. Price £5 plus £1 p&p. All profits to City of London branch funds to acquire a branch banner.

Further information or orders to Colin Dawson 01689 8495 4322 or Hutchingsons Rd, Croydon, Surrey CR0 0BD.



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LIMITED RAMSGATE ASLEF BADGE is now available in a limited edition of 100 individually numbered badges struck to commemorate the restoration and re-naming of ex Ramsgate loco Manston. They are £5.00 each with first class recorded delivery at £1.50. For further details either email asleframsgate@hotmail.co.uk or phone Ramsgate branch secretary Dave Bull on 07941142163

ASLEF NOTTINGHAM BRANCH 125 YEAR CELEBRATION TIES (1883 – 2008). Blue with Robin Hood motif. Few remaining. £10 including p and p. Cheques payable to Nottingham Locomotion's Welfare Fund. Contact Branch Sec A. Jones, 23 Matlock Ave, Mansfield, Notts NG18 5DW.



Seeing the picture of a tank wagon at Ripple Lane in the May edition of the Journal brought to mind this photo I took a while back. But who put the red 'Not to Go' labels on? The blocks were quite strong too!

T. J. G. Cadby – Retired
Driver – ex Westbury

ASLEF'S legal services – your rights for their wrongs!

FREE LEGAL ADVICE ASLEF also provides first class free legal advice – both for members and for their dependents. In the first six months of this year we have secured £1,442,369 in compensation claims! Call the helpline on 0808 100 8009

EMERGENCIES If you are an ASLEF member who is arrested or being interviewed by the police and need legal assistance – day or night – you can call the members' Emergency Hotline on 0800 587 7530.

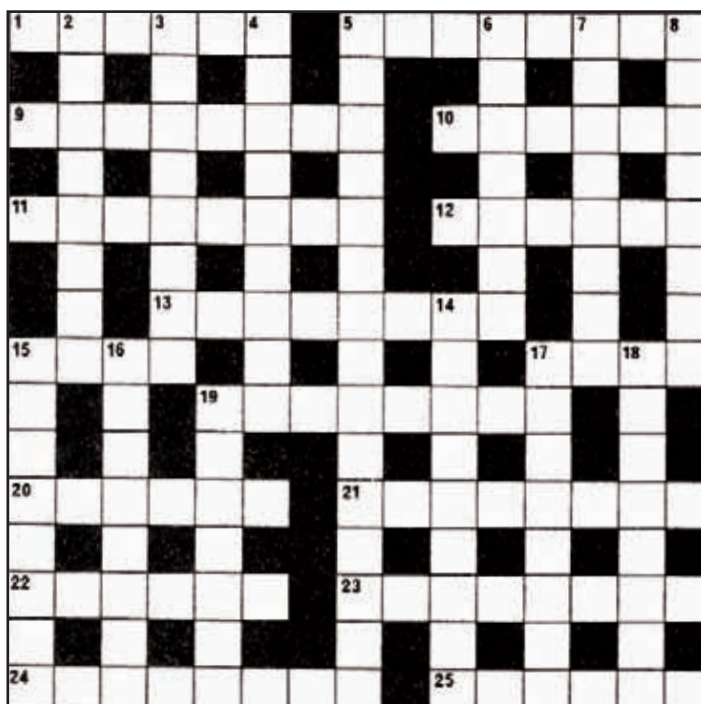
SACKINGS OR OTHER PROBLEMS AT WORK Harassment, discrimination or bullying? If your local, branch or district representative is unavailable, call the Industrial Relations department at union headquarters (020 7317 8600) or email info@aslef.org.uk

ASLEF *more than just a union*



Prize Crossword No. 39

set by TLC



Solution to Crossword No 38 which appeared in the June edition of the ASLEF Journal. Congratulations to **Tony Lees** from **Chippenham**.

ACROSS 3 Commuter 8 Looe 9 Passengers 10 Visa 11 Robs 13 Rotor 17 Office 18 Potato 19 Tough 22 Perm 24 Imam 25 Escalators 26 Tree 27 National **DOWN** 1 Bogie 2 Departing 4 Oasis 5 Manor 6 Trent 7 Rest room 12 Beer 14 Optimists 15 Northern 16 Apse 20 Uncut 21 Hello 22 Pitta 23 Fares

Thanks for all your responses to the 38th ASLEF crossword in the June edition. If you complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 9 Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB by the 14th of the issue month.

CLUES ACROSS

- 1 They have their own van at the rear of the train (6)
- 5 Eagerly awaited by railwaymen and their families (8)
- 9 Station named after a long reigning Monarch (8)
- 10 Fill the car up with this before setting off (unless it's a diesel!) (6)
- 11 Idle, lazy (8)
- 12 She's a member of the ----- sex (6)
- 13 Lifted up to the Peerage? (8)
- 15 ---- Blyton, author of children's books (4)
- 17 Snakes, small vipers (4)
- 19 Old bangers, perhaps? (4,4)
- 20 Give an address from the Pulpit (6)
- 21 Worshipped (8)
- 22 Iron frame used for placing cooking pots on top of a fire (6)
- 23 Praised, applauded (8)
- 24 North London Borough including Crouch End, Wood Green etc.(8)
- 25 Composed, dignified (6)

CLUES DOWN

- 2 He's joined the ranks of ASLEF members! (5,3)
- 3 Supplies restricted because of a food or petrol shortage (8)
- 4 Wizards, those having magic powers (9)
- 5 Government body concerned with protecting the individual (6,3,6)
- 6 The capital of this country is Reykjavik (6)
- 7 Pilots, navigators etc in charge of aeroplanes (8)
- 8 Earnings paid monthly, usually into a Bank Account (8)
- 14 Removes to a place of safety in wartime, or during earthquakes etc. (9)
- 15 Worn to protect vision, after a boxing match for example (3,5)
- 16 Not up to accepted quality (8)
- 17 Attacked (8)
- 18 Hard-surfaced path for pedestrians etc. (8)
- 19 Unhygienic, dirty (7)



The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

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